

# **Chignal Parish Council**

C/O 45 Cherry Garden Road, Great Waltham, Chelmsford, Essex, CM3 1DH

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Clerk: Will Adshead-Grant

Chair: Lynn Ballard.

Website: [e-voice.org.uk/Chignal-Parish](http://e-voice.org.uk/Chignal-Parish)

Vice Chair: Linda Nelson.

Website: [Chignalparish.org.uk](http://Chignalparish.org.uk)

Minutes of the Bi-Monthly Meeting of the Chignal Parish Council held on Monday 9<sup>th</sup> September 2024 at 7.30pm.

## 2024/753 Chair's Welcome.

The utility works on the gas pumping station near Steven's farm started a week ago. Lots of excavation and lots of aggregate lorries. National Grid Gas were undertaking maintenance work with the gas pipe switched off. Works being undertaken for 19 weeks. Work had been starting at 6am. Chelmsford City Council environmental services have contacted Redfern (the contractors) to work 8am to 6pm -Monday to Friday and a Saturday morning.

Chair: Ballard.

Cllrs: Nelson, Nelson, Lewis, Towns , Elwick and Stainton.

## 2024/754 Apologies for Absence.

None required.

## 2024/755 Confirmation of the minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council held on 08<sup>th</sup> July 2024.

**Resolution: The minutes were confirmed.**

## 2024/756 Note the minutes of the Orchard subcommittee held on 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2024.

**Resolution: The minutes were noted.**

## 2024/757 Declarations of Interests and any requests for dispensation.

There were no requests.

## 2024/758 Public Open Session for any matters that need to be drawn to the Parish Council's attention.

(The items do not need to be on the current agenda).

Six members of the public present.

- Concerns raised about the building site at 2 Ivy cottages. A messy site now works appears to have stopped – Completed? Appears that they have removed some of the fencing (Chelmsford City Council owned) of the Orchard.
- Request for information concerning what funding is available from CIL or Parish Reserves for the support of Church Projects since the change in the legal guidance from National Association of Local Councils. Potentially upgrade of a memorial garden. Potential for an eco-toilet.

## 2024/759 County and City Councillors' Reports.

- i. Essex County Councillor Report – Cllr Mike Steel.

### **Broomfield Hospital staff parking charges:**

The hospital is reintroducing Staff Parking Permits and charging from September. This is something many Trusts have already done.

Staff car parking charges were suspended during the Covid-19 pandemic, with the Government covering the lost income to NHS organisations. That funding stopped at the end of March 2022 and the Trust has since covered the cost and would continue to face significant financial losses if they did not re-introduce staff parking charges.

Providing free parking has also led to a significant increase in the number of staff driving into work, meaning they have unsafe numbers of cars parking on site.

The number of permits currently allocated far exceeds capacity, so everyone who already has a parking permit will have to reapply and demonstrate that they meet the standardised criteria. The process begins in August.

Lower-paid staff who are eligible for permits – working at bands 2 and 3 – will not be charged to park. Most staff will be paying less than they were before the pandemic.

Benefits of introducing parking permits:

There will be a more equitable system of parking with an agreed criteria across our main sites. maintain safe levels of parking on the sites.

Staff will be encouraged to use public transport or greener forms of transport to reduce the environmental impact.

Money will be reinvested into the car parking infrastructure and sustainable travel initiatives.

The hospital is aware that the new system will mean some people who currently drive to work will not be allocated a permit and will therefore need to explore other forms of transport.

### **Shuttle service relaunched with seamless travel to Chelmsford hospital.**

The Chelmer Valley Park and Ride will return to Broomfield Hospital on Thursday 1 August. It will run every half-hour from 6:30am to 8:00pm, Monday to Friday.

The shuttle will be run by Essex County Council's minibus fleet, Ugobus, with standard Park-and-Ride [ticket prices](#).

The Chelmer Valley to Broomfield Hospital service closed during the Covid-19 pandemic. The council has since been working with the Mid Essex Hospitals Trust to see it reintroduced.

Demand for parking at Broomfield Hospital frequently exceeds the number of spaces available, so the return of this service will help to take away the stress of finding a space for staff and patients and ease parking pressure at the hospital site.

The shuttle bus service will run every half-hour from 6.30am to 8.00pm, Monday to Friday (excluding bank holidays). Normal Park and ride ticket prices will apply, with NHS staff paying a discounted rate of £1.50 for the Broomfield Hospital route.

### **A particularly wet and warm year has led to accelerated plant growth along the county's roads and pavements.**

Overgrown grass is being cut back across Essex to keep roads and footpaths safe following unprecedented temperatures and rainfall. Essex Highways has launched its grass-cutting programme to clear verges along the A13, A130, A133, A127 and A1245.

The programme includes rural areas around Colchester, Epping Forest, Tendring and Uttlesford. Other areas will be addressed by the relevant district, borough, and city councils.

Grass within a metre of road edges is trimmed twice a year by Essex Highways to ensure clear lines of sight, improved visibility, and safer navigation.

Recent months of heavy rainfall and warm temperatures have resulted in plants growing at faster rates.

East Anglia saw its wettest February since records began, according to the Met Office, as well as its warmest ever spring.

Essex Highways is working with Essex County Council's arboriculture team to preserve vital wildflower species and support local biodiversity where it is safe to do so.

Vegetation maintenance is one of the key areas which will benefit from the [£25 million Priority One funding boost](#) recently announced by the council for Essex Highways.

Note – I have already arranged monitoring and extra cuts at the junction between Great Waltham and Little Waltham

### **Local Transport Plan 4**

Essex County Council has launched a public consultation on its Essex Transport Strategy, formally known as the Local Transport Plan.

The strategy will provide an overarching plan for transport across Essex and outline the council's vision.

The consultation focuses on key themes and outcomes as an opportunity for the public to provide feedback, helping inform further development of the strategy.

The consultation also proposes a new 'Place and Movement' approach. This would introduce a more flexible and people-focused way to categorise roads and streets in Essex.

ECC are still in the process of developing the strategy and this public consultation is an early opportunity for people to provide feedback on the key principles.

The initial public consultation will run for seven weeks, closing on Sunday 22 September 2024, and can be accessed at

<https://consultations.essex.gov.uk/essex-highways/essex-transport-strategy/>

A second consultation on the full draft strategy and a programme of planned investment in various parts of Essex is expected to take place early next year.

I have attended presentations on this, and my own view is that this is overdue and vague.

It includes a methodology for new classification of roads into a three-by-three matrix based on "place" and "movement" (rather than the existing 3 – PR1, PR2, Local Road) but it does not go far enough and say what roads will be what. Furthermore, there it indicates that PCs will not be consulted on the allocated classifications (although District Councils will). I have expressed my disappointment with the strategy document.

#### **Improvements to the Highways Tell Us tool.**

Improvements have been made to the Essex Highways Tell Us tool to make it easier for residents to report issues on the county's roads.

The improvements made to the Report It tool in recent weeks include:

ability to report some urgent issues such as large potholes, fallen trees or flooded roads online an option to tell us that a known issue has got worse.

the ability to sign up to updates on an issue, allowing Essex Highways to make the reporting map clearer defect photos so residents can decide if the issue they wish to report is an existing one, or something new.

A successful trial of reporting urgent issues online took place between February and April. During the trial, 242 online enquiries were received with 58% requiring emergency action.

The number of emergency issues reported during the trial increased by 84%, highlighting the effectiveness of the new online reporting option.

Other positive outcomes from the trial included a significant reduction in the average time taken to make issues safe, with response times reduced by more than half.

The number of highways-related calls also reduced, saving approximately 23 hours of call centre agent time in March alone.

#### **LHP:**

The Village gateway is scheduled for implementation in Q3 – Oct to Dec 2024.

I have an LHP meeting next week and if I get anything other than confirmation of this, I will let you know.

- ii. Chelmsford City Councillor Report - Cllr Nicolette Chambers  
Nothing raised – apologies given.

2024/760      Planning.

Planning Applications.

1. **Planning Application: 24/01059/CLEUD.** Hard Oak Mashbury Road Chignal St James. Description of works: Certificate of lawfulness to regularise the use of a building as a single dwellinghouse for more than 4 years by 25 April 2024.

This application is for a Certificate of Lawfulness for a separate dwelling to the rear of Hardoak. The applicant is seeking approval for a two-bedroom unit based on continuous occupation for more than 4 years. The plans also show additional two-bedroom extensions, making this a 4-bedroom property. There is mention that a further retrospective planning application would then be submitted for this two-bedroom extension which has already been added to this dwelling. It is noted that this dwelling was subject to a planning enforcement investigation prior to this CLEUD application. The applicant maintains that members of their family occupied the dwelling up until April 2024 and is now apparently empty.

Chelmsford Local Plan

“POLICY DM8 – NEW BUILDINGS AND STRUCTURES IN THE RURAL AREA

D) Residential outbuildings

Planning permission will be granted for outbuildings to be used for purposes incidental to the enjoyment of the dwelling where the new building:

i. is located within the curtilage of the dwelling; and ii. is proportionate in size and scale, and ancillary in appearance to the host dwelling; and iii. is in keeping with its context and surroundings and does not result in any other harm.

8.65 Replacement buildings will only be permitted where the original building is lawful. For the purposes of replacement dwellings, original means as built on 1 April 1974, or if built after this date, as originally built. Buildings must be of permanent and substantial construction. This is to avoid the replacement of shacks, caravans, railway carriages or other structures which, through the passage of time have blended into the landscape. The proposed replacement or rebuild must be acceptable in its setting by virtue of its siting, volume, form, and scale.”

It is considered that a separate 4-bedroom dwelling within the curtilage of Hardoak that has been occupied by a separate household, is contrary to DM8 d). as it has not been used for purposes incidental to the enjoyment of the main dwelling. In addition, it is not proportionate in size and scale, and not ancillary in appearance to the host dwelling.

The construction and occupation of this separate dwelling was not apparent to the Parish Council as it is not visible from Mashbury Road, being hidden from view by high hedges and fences. Given this lack of visibility, we cannot comment on whether it has been occupied for 4 years as stated by the applicant. However, Bedroom 1 would for a period of time have had no windows to give natural light or ventilation and the Kitchen/Dining/Lounge would have limited light from the other side of the building. The elevation shows three stable doors and a pair of double doors these are not shown on the plan. The plan also indicates that Bedroom 4 has windows on the north and south elevations, but the elevations only show a window on the north elevation. It is not clear whether this drawing shows the current building or incorporates some future alterations.

The Council considers that any outbuildings on this site should only be for the incidental enjoyment of the residents of the main property, Hardoak. They should not be used for occupation by separate households, thus creating separate additional dwelling units. The access to the Hardoak site has restricted visibility and any additional vehicle movements should only be via the existing entrance gate.

Conversion of the barn sited close to the road (11/00123/FUL) was approved but the applicant’s statement advises this has not been carried out as they decided to convert the stable block which is subject to this CLEUD application instead. It is noted that this barn has recently been reroofed, clad and windows added.

Given that the development which the applicant is seeking to legalise would be contrary to Policy DM8, it is recommended that this CLEUD application should be **REFUSED**.

**Resolution: The Parish Council refuses planning permission.**

2. **Planning Application: 24/01172/FUL**. Howletts Hall Mashbury Road Chignal St James. Description of works: Single storey rear extension and a single storey link extension between house and existing annexe.

The Chignal Parish Plan, 2016, includes a Key Task to “support residents to improve their homes and stay in the village” and this is amplified in Objective 20, “to support opportunities for local residents to improve their homes or move to other properties in the Parish as a result of down-sizing, setting up new households or requiring additional care in line with the Chignal Villages Design Statement (VDS)”.

The VDS gives guidance on house extensions, Page 20, “extensions should be sympathetic to the property and in harmony with the surroundings”. In addition, “extensions should not unduly affect adjoin residents and should not completely fill the available space, as it is important in a rural community to provide views of the countryside beyond and thus avoid the urbanisation of the street scene.”

Chelmsford Local Plan Policy DM11 Extensions to existing buildings within the green belt, green wedge, and rural area. Within the Rural Area the extensions must not adversely impact on the identified intrinsic character and beauty of the Rural Area. In all designations, the extension or alteration must not be out of keeping with its context and surroundings or result in any other harm.

The application is for a fully glazed link approximately 5m square to join two existing buildings together with a flat "Sedum" green roof and a large, glazed skylight over, which will then become one large residential property. In addition, there is a proposal for an extension on the east elevation for a Breakfast Room/ Sun Lounge.

The Breakfast Room/ Sun Lounge would be visible from the public footpath and the new Link extension may just be visible from the south end of the footpath. Neither the drawings nor the application form shows the public footpath that runs from the access track to the southern end of the applicant's property.

The application states that all external finishes will match the existing. It is noted that there is already a random mix of brickwork, render, roof tiles and slate and now the addition of flat sedum roofing along with a mix of pitched and glazed roof lights.

The Link connects two distinctive style buildings together. The architectural style of the Link extension is different again which serves to maintain this visual separation. It is noted that the applicant has had discussions with the City Council's planning department and that the proposed extensions are acceptable in principle.

The Chignal VDS recommends that extensions should be sympathetic to the property and in harmony with the surroundings. Given the range of materials and different architectural styles of the individual buildings on this site, it would be difficult to achieve harmony by linking them together. The proposed Link emphasises the separation whilst providing a more convenient connection of the living accommodation. The construction of the Link could, however, provide an opportunity to create a more coherent front elevation to the main house by, for example, moving the front door to the Link extension.

The new extensions would be visible from a public footpath that borders the site but not from any other property. It is not considered that it would impact on the identified intrinsic character and beauty of the Rural Area.

Recommendation: APPROVAL.

**Resolution: The Parish Council approves this planning application.**

3. **Planning Application: 24/00986/CLOPUD**. 2 Water Hall Cottages, Fox Road, Chignal Smealey CM1 4TL. Description of works: Proposed single storey side extension.

The **Chignal Parish Plan**, 2016, includes a Key Task to “support residents to improve their homes and stay in the village” and this is amplified in Objective 20, “to support opportunities for local residents to improve their homes or move to other properties in the Parish as a result of down-sizing, setting up new households or requiring additional care in line with the **Chignal Villages Design Statement (VDS)**”.

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The building works will increase the cottage at ground floor by approximately 50% which is for a new kitchen and dining area. Further alterations to the interior of the ground floor are also included in this application.

This is a quite simple side extension, on a good-sized plot but with little architectural merit, however it matches the existing cottage. It considered to be sympathetic to the property and would not affect adjoin residents unduly.

Recommended for **APPROVAL**

**Resolution:** *The Parish Council approves this planning application.*

**Resolution:** *Clerk to make the Planning department aware that this area sits within Chignal Parish, and the Parish Council should be a statutory Planning consultee.*

Decisions by Chelmsford City Council Planning:

<u>Reference</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>Status</u>
24/00849/LBC	Office Stevens Farm Mashbury Road Chignal St James Chelmsford Essex CM1 4TX	Application Permitted
24/00848/FUL	Office Stevens Farm Mashbury Road Chignal St James Chelmsford Essex CM1 4TX	Application Permitted

## Finance

2024/761 Review the Accounts for 2024/2025 and the current position of the budget.

Budget Column	Staff Costs			Administration								Total Expenses
	salary	pension	paye	Expenses	IT & Web	insurance	EALC RCCE	Auditors Internal	Play field Maintenance	Bank charges	Hall hire	
	£3,500.0	£1,000.0	£500.0	£100.0	£250.0	£600.0	£300.0	£300.0	£700.0	£30.0	£500.0	£7,780.0
Total Spend Year to Date	£1,150.13	£872.90	£231.20	£0.00	£0.00	£518.94	£220.26	£125.00	£288.00	£0.00	£90.00	£3,496.43
Balances of Budget	£2,349.87	£127.10	£268.80	£100.00	£250.00	£81.06	£79.74	£175.00	£412.00	£30.00	£410.00	£4,283.57
Forecast Budget Spend	£1,610.18	£1,222.06	£323.68	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£200.00	£18.00	£126.00	£3,499.92
Total Forecast FY Spend	£2,760.31	£2,094.96	£554.88	£0.00	£0.00	£518.94	£220.26	£125.00	£488.00	£18.00	£216.00	£6,996.35
Total Budget Balance	£739.69	-£1,094.96	-£54.88	£100.00	£250.00	£81.06	£79.74	£175.00	£212.00	£12.00	£284.00	£783.65

Forecast underspend of £783.65 (7 months remaining).

2024/762 Finance:

Account Balances on 29.08.2024 :	
<b><u>Cheque Account</u></b>	<b>£ 3,863.18</b>
<b><u>Orchard Account</u></b>	£ 1,180.80
<b><u>Saving Account</u></b>	£ <b>44,257.46</b>
• General Reserve	£10,900
• Cil	£13,167
• Earmarked Reserves	£10,000

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**Total**                    **£ 48,120.64**

2024/763 Payments for approval.  
To approve the following payments:

Payment to	Description	Budget Column	Cost
Essex Pension Fund	(August) Pension	Pension	£174.48
Clerk	Salary + Expenses (Aug)	Salary	£231.10
HMRC	PAYE (August)	PAYE	£46.40
Cllr Lewis	Orchard Signs	Cil (Nov 2019)	£152.88
Cllr Lewis	Orchard Fruit Baskets	(Nov 23)	£33.99
Cllr Lewis	Orchard Folding Fruit Baskets	(Nov 23)	£41.75
HMRC	PAYE (Sept)	PAYE	£46.20
Essex Pension Fund	(Sept) Pension	Pension	£174.48
Clerk	Salary (Sept) + Expenses	Salary	£264.96
Village Hall	Hall Hire	Hall Hire	130.30
Taylor Agricultural	3 Playing field cuts	Play Field Maintenance	288
		<b>Total</b>	<b>£1,584.54</b>

**Resolution:**    **The payments were approved.**

2024/764 Review of the Bi-monthly bank reconciliation.

**Resolution:**    **Zero difference between cash book and bank account.**

2024/765 Review the running cost and maintenance of the PC owned lawnmowers and discuss options on running costs.

ITEM	LOCATION	PURCHASE DATE	Purchase Cost
HUSQVARNA TS138 MOWER	ORCHARD	29.09.2018	£1,500
HUSQVARNA RDTC138 MOWER	Village Hall	30.06.2023	£2,250

Recommended annual servicing.

Cost from Ernest Doe is £570.  
Maintenance Kit is £56.15.

A volunteer will have a look at the Village Hall stored unit and see if this can be serviced the same as the orchard mower.

**Resolution: The Parish Council will reimburse the costs of the service kits.**

**Resolution: A volunteer will undertake the servicing with support from each user group.**

2024/766 Items approved for purchase but not yet actioned.

- (CIL) Gazebos x 4 – Pop up – for Community use - £1996 (incl vat) – Approved July 2024.
- (Reserves) Impact report for Pylon route - £ 150 – Approved July 2024.

**Resolution: Items noted for the budget meeting.**

2024/767 Discuss the charge card options on the Barclays Bank account to cease the practice of using Councillors or the Clerks own credit card to purchase items.

See the table issued with the agenda from the Barclays account options.

- Recommendation is £42 per year – ‘Select Charge Card’. – Note that the Cashback Credit card has a £0 cost so would be a better option.

**Resolution: Discuss at the Budget meeting.**

**Resolution: Open an amazon business account subject to the budget meeting.**

2024/768 Chignal Community Meeting: Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> October 2024 at the Village Hall, 9.30 for 10.00 – 12 noon.

Agree topics for the agenda and working groups.

- Review of the parish year – including Pylons review.
- Essex Local Nature Recovery Strategy consultation.
- Chignal graphic branding exercise. – What does Chignal Stand for?

**Resolution: The three topics were discussed and agreed with some finesse on the wording.**

2024/769 Chignal Welcome/Information booklet:

- Consider proposals for a graphic designer for parish branding and design of Welcome/Information leaflet.
- Consider Chignal Christmas card with website information on clubs and events.

**Resolution: Working group to be created and to review the options.**

**Resolution: Cllr Stainton, Nelson, Elwick, and Ballard – suggested 30<sup>th</sup> September – 3pm on wards.**

2024/770 Discuss the Red Telephone Box at The Green:

- Consider options for refurbishment and future uses.

**Resolution: Add the item to the community meeting for volunteers.**

**Resolution: Add potential uses to the community meeting.**

2024/771 Implementation of Community projects:

- Review of outstanding project ideas.

**Resolution: The items to be updated at the community meeting.**

2024/772 Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL):

Cil expenditure FY 2024 to date.



Payment to	Description	Budget Column	CILs
			<b>£15,059.34</b>
Clerk	Expenses - Gazebos	Cil	£1,891.99
Cllr Lewis	Orchard Signs	Cil (Nov 2019)	£152.88
Cllr Lewis	Orchard Fruit Baskets	(Nov 23)	£33.99
Cllr Lewis	Orchard Folding Fruit Baskets	(Nov 23)	£41.75
Clerk	Expenses (Laminator)	Cil	73.66
Total Spend Year to Date			<b>£2,194.27</b>
Balances			£12,865.07

- Consider grant applications.

**Resolution: Nothing received in time for the meeting.**

2024/773 2025-2026 Budget and Precept setting:

- Agree date of Budget Committee (before 11<sup>th</sup> November Parish Council meeting).

**Resolution: Friday 11<sup>th</sup> October 1pm in the committee room.**

## **REPORTS AND UPDATES.**

2024/774 Representatives' Reports: to discuss and debate any items.

A) Little Hollows / Copperfield Place Liaison - Cllr Elwick

- Landscaping: update from CCC Planning Enforcement.
  - Copperfield place – landscaping is a problem. Dead trees and hedges. Chelmsford City Council planning will revisit the site to review. Persimmon contract Director has confirmed that Persimmon have passed the development over to a management company. The 5-year clause on landscaping is the case that any items dying will be replaced.
  - The resident of Persimmon is paying for the management company but are considering withdrawing support.
  - Hollow Lane Road closure expected for the street light connections and the finger post installation with the extra arm due in November.

B) Village Hall Liaison - Cllr Towns.

Nothing to report.

C) Community Engagement - Cllr Nelson and Cllr Stainton.

- Community laptop and printer: storage in the village hall.
  - Cllr Nelson, Elwick, and Towns to resolve.

**Resolution: Budget up to £1000 for the cabinet.**

- Parish Website- feedback and update on training for clubs/groups.
  - Cllr Nelson is available to train up anyone that needs assistance.
- Chignal News – agree timetable for the electronic newsletter.
- The setting up of.gov.uk e-mails.
  - Clerk has a meeting on 19 September 2024 at 10:00 for a walkthrough the set-up process and potential grant towards the set-up costs.

D) Community Safety – Cllr Lewis

- Defibrillator in Chignal Smealey: update on siting and managing at the Chapel and St Nicholas Church.

**Resolution: Defer to the next meeting.**

E) Highways (include Hedges) - Cllr Towns

- Update on LHP funding for village entry gates
- Update on reinstalling the directional sign to Chignal Smealey at Hollow Lane/Chignal Road junction.

F) Countryside conservation. – Cllr Lewis.

- Essex Local Nature recovery strategy – update on public consultation. Government led initiative that has been running since 2021. Chignal identify to plan what the recovery should look like for the Parish. What works best and what would help identify Chignal Parish.

2024/775      Items for the next Agenda.

Meeting closed: 21:42

W. Adshead-Grant

Clerk to the Council.

**Next meetings:**

Monday 11<sup>th</sup> November 2024

Monday 13<sup>th</sup> January 2025

Monday 10<sup>th</sup> March 2025

Monday 12<sup>th</sup> May 2025

Bi-Monthly Meeting.

Bi-Monthly Meeting.

Annual Parish Meeting and Bi-Monthly Meeting.

Annual General Meeting and Bi-Monthly Meeting.